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JUN 13 2006

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 12 have been amended, and Claims 2-4, and 20 have been canceled without prejudice, leaving Claims 1, and 5-12 for consideration upon the entry of the amendments. No new matter has been added by the amendments.

Page 3, paragraph [0011], for example, discusses the feature "method for treating a component made of steel", as recited in Claim 1. Page 4, paragraph [0020] discusses the feature "arranging the component inside a processing space, wherein the surface of the component is untreated", as recited in Claim 1. Originally filed Claims 3-4 discuss the feature "performing the heat treatment at a low pressure, wherein a low pressure from 0.01mbar to 15mbar is applied", as recited in Claim 1. Page 3, paragraph [0013] discusses the feature "regulating a carbon content inside the processing space as a function of pressure, wherein the pressure is varied in order to reach a change of atmosphere in the processing space through the duration of the treatment", as recited in Claim 1.

Reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. 112:

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Since Claim 20 has been canceled without prejudice, the rejection of Claim 20 is moot.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102:

Claims 1-10, 12, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Watanabe et al., US 3,892,890 (hereinafter "Watanabe"). Since Claims 2-4 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice, the rejections of Claims 2-4 and 20 are moot. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections because Watanabe fails to disclose each and every element of Claim 1.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Claim 1 recites, as amended, "Method for treating a component made of steel, the method comprising: arranging the component inside a processing space, wherein the surface of the component is untreated; subjecting the untreated surface to a heat treatment, wherein supplying simultaneously a carbon-emitting medium into the processing space in order to achieve a blacked surface of the component; performing the heat treatment at a low pressure, wherein a low pressure from 0.01 mbar to 15mbar is applied; and regulating a carbon content inside the processing space as a function of pressure, wherein the pressure is varied in order to reach a change of atmosphere in the processing space through the duration of the treatment."

In contrary, the abstract of Watanabe teaches that a nickel-phosphorus alloy layer having an amount of 4-12 percent by weight phosphorus is first allowed to adhere to the surface of a substrate of a substrate and the nickel-phosphorus alloy layer-coated substrate is heated in an atmosphere of a noncombustible hydrocarbon-containing gas to effect thermal decomposition of the gas, thereby depositing carbon onto the surface of said substrate to form a dense carbon coating thereon,..., the resulting carbon coating. Therefore, the surface to be heated in an atmosphere of the noncombustible hydrocarbon-containing gas, as described in Watanabe, is not the untreated surface but the nickel-phosphorus alloy layer-coated substrate. Accordingly, Watanabe fails to disclose the feature "arranging the component inside a processing space, wherein the surface of the component is untreated", as recited in Claim 1.

Further, Watanabe is silent in the feature "supplying simultaneously a carbon-emitting medium into the processing space in order to achieve a blacked surface of the component", as recited in Claim 1. Therefore, Watanabe does not anticipate Claim 1, because it fails to disclose at least the features "arranging the component inside a processing space, wherein the surface of the component is untreated; and supplying simultaneously a carbon-emitting

medium into the processing space in order to achieve a blacked surface of the component", as recited in Claim 1. Claims 5-10 and 12 depend from Claim 1, and thus are believed to be allowable due to their dependency on Claim 1.

Claims 1-7, 10-12, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Carlson et al., US 4,060,660 (hereinafter "Carlson"). Since Claims 2-4 and 20 have been canceled without prejudice, the rejections of Claims 2-4 and 20 are moot. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections because Carlson fails to disclose each and every element of Claim 1.

Col. 2, lines 4-9 of Carlson teach that high quality amorphous carbon coating can be applied to a glassy substrate by heating the glassy substrate within a temperature range from about 300°C to 500°C. Thus, Carlson fails to disclose the feature "treating a component made of steel", as recited in Claim 1. Also, Carlson simply discloses a method of depositing transparent, resistive amorphous carbon films on glassy substrate in a D.C. glow discharge (See Col. 1, lines 7-9). Carlson however, does not disclose the feature "supplying simultaneously a carbon-emitting medium into the processing space in order to achieve a blacked surface of the component", as recited in Claim 1.

Therefore, Carlson does not anticipate Claim 1 because it fails to disclose at least the features "treating a component made of steel; and supplying simultaneously a carbon-emitting medium into the processing space in order to achieve a blacked surface of the component", as recited in Claim 1. Claims 5-7 and 10-12 depend from Claim 1, and thus are believed to be allowable due to their dependency on Claim 1.

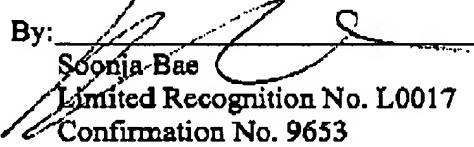
Conclusion

It is believed that the foregoing amendments and remarks fully comply with the Office Action and that the claims herein should now be allowable to Applicants. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 13, 2006